

Principal Linc September 28, 2009

Curriculum Night and Parent Conferences

Thursday, October 1 is an opportunity for parents to visit their child's classroom and hear about grade level curriculum, homework routines etc. The schedule is as follows:

Kindergarten and Grade 3 – 6:30-7:00

Grades 4, 1 and Multiage - 7:00-7:30

Grades 2 and 5 – 7:30-8:00

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be October 21, 22 and 23. You will be receiving a conference appointment notice on Oct. 8. This is an opportunity to discuss academic and social goals for your child so save questions specific to your child for conference time.

Flu Presentation and Clinic

Due to timing issues with H1N1 vaccine, Winchester may need to move up the dates of the seasonal school-based clinics to the first week of October. Lynn Vozella had planned to speak about the flu clinics at the Oct. 8th LSPA meeting. Instead, she will give a short presentation to interested parents on Thursday, October 1 from 8:00 -8:30 am in the auditorium. Before-school supervision will begin at 8:00 am to accommodate parents attending the presentation. Clinic dates will be published soon.

School Council

The School Councils of Massachusetts are charged with identifying and implementing school improvement initiatives. Lincoln held its first '09 school council meeting Wednesday, Sept 23. We will be aligning our school improvement plan with the district goals of curriculum review, availability and innovative use of technology, improved leadership structure, strengthening of the teaching and learning environment, and strengthening of community relations. Additionally, we will be researching ways to improve the traffic, parking and the playground at Lincoln School. Your parent representatives are just an email away if you have any ideas to share. They are:

Laura Bailey bullbailey1@gmail.com

Carmen Kenrich ckenrich@yahoo.com

Tobey Kelly Tobey.Kelly@comcast.net

Jen Degnan jldegnan@msn.com

Faculty members are: Barbara Tully, Kathy Kennedy and Wayne Haugh. We will do our best to keep you informed of our efforts on behalf of Lincoln School.

Student Service Council

Student Service Council elections are being held for third, fourth and fifth graders. Under the guidance of Sue Costello and Joyce Linehan, elected students are also given a voice in ways to improve Lincoln School. This year, the council will have as its focus school spirit. Each class will elect a male and female representative. Election results will be announced as soon as possible.

Behavioral Expectations- Working Together

The focus of our October faculty meeting will be using effective and consistent behavioral strategies. Lauren Garneau will lead the discussion, drawing on her training and varied experiences in other settings. As with academics, there are expectations and practices that make sense for all students. The following letter speaks to some of the challenges that are inherent in the start of each new year and throughout the year. We will continue to communicate with you about our efforts in the area of desirable behavior so that you may provide a message that is consistent with ours regarding behavior in a public school setting.

Please remember dogs are not allowed on school property for the safety of the children.

Dear Lincoln School Community,

Now that the school year is underway, we are faced with many new and exciting challenges at Lincoln School. As a community, we focus on providing opportunities for educational growth and learning and encourage all students to rise to their academic potential. Not only do we strive for educational excellence, but we also put great emphasis on social and emotional wellbeing. At Lincoln School, students are held to several behavioral expectations in order to ensure a safe and comfortable learning environment for all students.

As we settle into the 2009-2010 school year, students and staff have met as a community to go over some core values here at Lincoln. During this whole-school assembly, Mrs. Scanlon reviewed two specific expectations: respect and responsibility. Furthermore, Lauren Garneau, School Psychologist, has been into each classroom and has begun working with teachers to provide monthly lessons during Open Circle. These lessons focus on friendship issues, group work, conflict management, school expectations, and other social topics. These are structured meetings during which students can voice concerns about problematic issues, work together to find solutions to problems, and practice how to react to one another when difficult situations arise.

Given the nature of the school environment, behavioral challenges will occur. As staff members at Lincoln School, we have implemented certain procedures to handle these circumstances. We would like to share these behavioral guidelines with families, so we all can promote excellence in our students. We have noticed that transition times and unstructured activities, particularly lunch and recess, can be especially difficult for some students. When students unintentionally demonstrate inappropriate behavior, we use common language and modeling to help redirect students back to task. Several classrooms here at Lincoln also include a "Settling Space" area, where students can go to re-group if they are having difficulty following classroom expectations. Of course, we continually acknowledge and praise appropriate behavior at school.

At times, students deliberately make choices that go against behavioral expectations at Lincoln School. Refusing to follow directions or participate in group activities could result in loss of privileges such as recess, choice time, or interactions with peers. If one's behavior interferes with the learning of the whole, a student may be removed from the classroom for a brief period of time. Depending on the severity and frequency, aggressive behavior can result in loss of multiple privileges, parental involvement, and even suspension.

Know that we are continually striving to provide the best overall environment for all children at Lincoln School. Our faculty meeting Oct. 6 will focus on clarifying the above strategies so that we as a staff can be as consistent in our approach as possible. Thank you for your support of these practices and your understanding that all children can use support and guidance to manage social situations.

Kate Scanlon and Lauren Garneau